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Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2228 (2015), by which the Council extended the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) until 30 June 2016 and requested that I report every 90 days on the implementation of the mission's mandate. It provides an update and analysis of the conflict and the political situation as well as the operational environment in Darfur from 26 May 2015, the date of publication of my previous report (S/2015/378), until 15 September 2015. It further presents the achievements of UNAMID in implementing its revised strategic priorities, endorsed by the Security Council in resolutions 2148 (2014), 2173 (2014) and 2228 (2015), and in achieving its revised benchmarks (see S/2014/279 and resolution 2228 (2015)). In addition, the report highlights the main challenges to effective mandate implementation and provides updates on the further implementation of the 2014 strategic review, the transfer of tasks to the United Nations country team and the exit strategy.

II. Conflict dynamics and security situation

A. Current trends and conflict dynamics in Darfur

2. The conflict in Darfur remained characterized by counter-insurgency military operations of the Government of the Sudan with the objective of decreasing the operational capability of the non-signatory armed movements. In particular, government forces focused their efforts on dislodging the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) from its stronghold in the Jebel Marra area and preventing the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi (SLA/MM) forces from regrouping.

Fighting between government forces and rebel groups

3. In late May and early June, government forces continued with counter-insurgency operations with significant troop build-ups in Jebel Marra in further attempts to dislodge SLA/AW from the Rokero area. On 7 June, aerial bombardments were carried out in the Burgo and Targe village in Central Darfur. On

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8 June, SLA/AW elements ambushed a Sudanese Armed Forces convoy which was on its way to Rokero, around Savanga village near Golo town. On 11 and 14 June, aerial bombardment of SLA/AW positions was carried out in the Dalo and Solow areas, west of Rokero. On 15 and 16 June, government forces conducted aerial and ground operations in villages near Rowata. The combined air and ground offensive succeeded in dislodging SLA/AW from Rokero, Rowata and Burgo villages.

4. After achieving significant military gains vis-à-vis the armed movements through the implementation of the second phase of its "Decisive Summer" counter-insurgency operation from December 2014 to June 2015, the Government maintained an operational pause, owing mainly to movement restrictions faced by its troops during the rainy season. This pause provided the SLA/AW with a window of opportunity to launch several counteroffensives, including an attack on a Sudanese Armed Forces observation post at Keibi Mountain near Guldo, Central Darfur, on 3 July, and on two Sudanese Armed Forces checkpoints near Golo town, Central Darfur, on 4 July. In so doing, the SLA/AW attempted to demonstrate its enduring relevance to the conflict by disrupting the Government's effective control of the Guldo area. On 2 September, SLA/AW released 13 Sudanese Armed Forces soldiers who had been held prisoner in Jebel Marra since 2012.

5. JEM and SLA/MM, by contrast, largely avoided confrontation with government forces in their main conflict zones within the central (Shangil Tobaya, Dobo, Thabit, Fanga Suk and Tawilla) and northern corridors (area north-east of Kutum and Umm Baru, North Darfur). This is believed to be the result of the deterrent effect of the Government's reinforcements, including the Rapid Support Forces, in strategic locations between Fanga Suk, Tawilla and Shangil Tobaya, as well the significant losses in personnel and equipment suffered in the battle with the government forces at Nikhara near Tulus, South Darfur, in April 2015.

6. Nevertheless, on 14 June, an unknown armed group attacked a Sudanese Armed Forces position in Ta'alba village north-east of Tawilla, killing two Sudanese Armed Forces soldiers. On 16 June, the Sudanese Armed Forces suffered a similar attack in Orchi, east of Umm Baru, North Darfur. UNAMID was unable to confirm the involvement of SLA/MM or JEM elements in these attacks. Meanwhile, on 15 June, another splinter group led by Abbas Aseel, a former SLA/AW intelligence operative, attacked a government military camp at Seleah in Jebel Moon, north of El Geneina, West Darfur, resulting in the death of two Sudanese Armed Forces soldiers.

7. On 14 July, the Sudan Liberation Army/Free Will, a splinter armed group allied with the Government, together with Northern Rezeigat militias, clashed with elements of the Popular Defence Forces in Kafod, North Darfur, resulting in the death of six civilians and the looting and burning of a local market. On 5 August, the Government brokered a cessation of hostilities agreement between the adversaries.

Local conflicts and intercommunal violence

8. Traditionally, intercommunal conflict in Darfur has occurred over access, use and management of resources, most frequently between sedentary-farming and nomadic-pastoral communities and was generally resolved by local leaders through traditional mechanisms. Despite local mediation efforts, the underlying causes of such violence remain largely unaddressed. Moreover, beyond resources disputes, the

conflict between the Government and the rebel movements has contributed to a significant increase in the frequency and intensity of intercommunal fighting. The instrumentalization of local militias, along with their continued influence, the availability of arms to local communities and widespread impunity, has resulted in tribal conflict becoming the main cause of violent death and substantial displacement of civilians in many parts of Darfur.

9. During the reporting period, UNAMID recorded 13 incidents of intercommunal fighting, mostly between Arab clans, which resulted in 164 fatalities, as compared to 11 incidents and 278 fatalities during the previous period. In most cases, the Government intervened quickly to end the violence and contain the situation. In particular, the newly appointed governors of East and South Darfur have taken strong measures to curb intercommunal violence within their States, including the creation of security buffer zones between warring communities, putting pressure on them to refrain from violence and arresting suspected perpetrators. Nonetheless, the continued recurrence of these conflicts points to the need for reconciliation processes that go beyond the mere containment of violence and address its root causes so as to ensure the sustainability of peaceful coexistence between local communities.

Land disputes

10. Land ownership is the underlying cause of the disputes between Ma'alia and Rezeigat in Abu Karinka and Adilla, East Darfur, and Berti and Zeyadiyah in Malha, Al Kouma and Mellit, North Darfur. The discovery of oil deposits in areas in which the Ma'alia reside and to which the Southern Rezeigat claim ownership further exacerbated their conflict.

11. The dispute between Ma'alia and Southern Rezeigat, which resulted in 320 fatalities in August 2014 and 107 in May 2015, remained unresolved and their relations continued to be tense. On 18 July, approximately 500 Southern Rezeigat youth mobilized near El Daien in preparation for an attack on the Ma'alia a few days later. News of the mobilization resulted in the displacement of at least 150 Ma'alia from Um Rakuba to Abu Karinka, Adilla, Hilal and Abu Jabra areas. The attack was prevented following engagement of the South Darfur State Governor with the Southern Rezeigat leadership, and the deployment of additional Sudanese Armed Forces troops into the buffer zone, which was established after the fighting between the two communities in May 2015.

12. Despite signing a cessation of hostilities in March 2015, fighting between Berti and Zeyadiyah tribes reignited on 4 July in Mellit locality, North Darfur, over the theft of livestock. On 5 July, Zeyadiyah attacked Hillet Abdul Rahim village near Mellit, killing seven Berti and looting their property. In retaliation, and for supporting the Zeyadiyah in previous incidents, on 8 and 10 July, Berti tribesmen attacked and burned six Beni Omran villages resulting in an unconfirmed number of fatalities. On 12 July, Berti and Zeyadiyah signed separate cessation of hostilities agreements with the State government, while additional Sudanese Armed Forces troops were deployed to Mellit to stabilize the situation. In the absence of a viable reconciliation process, fighting resumed once more over cattle-rustling, with Beni Omran attacking Hillet Ibrahim village and killing two Berti on 27 July and, together with the Zeyadiyah, attacking Husban Duma village in El Taweisha, North Darfur, and killing another two Berti on 17 August.

Cattle-rustling

13. Incidents of cattle-rustling, particularly in East and South Darfur, remained frequent during the ongoing migration season and, coupled with the lack of effective local rule of law and judicial institutions, exacerbated intercommunal disputes. From 13 to 16 July, fighting resumed between Habaniya and Southern Rezeigat in Al Sunta, South Darfur, and El Ferdous, East Darfur, resulting in 46 fatalities. In response, the Government reinforced the Sudanese Armed Forces buffer zones between the two communities, while South Darfur authorities arrested 21 Southern Rezeigat and 11 Habaniya in relation to these incidents. Also in South Darfur, fighting between Fallata and Salamat over cattle-rustling resumed from 13 to 15 August in the Al Nadhif area in Buram and led to 83 fatalities. A ceasefire agreement between the two tribes was concluded on 7 September. Further cattle-rustling-related clashes in East Darfur were recorded on 2 July between Ma'alia and Northern Rezeigat in Abu Duweiman village in Shearia and, on 4 July, between Northern Rezeigat and Habaniya in Umelkhairat, south-east of El Daien, both resulting in three fatalities.

Access to farmland

14. Conflicts over the use of and access to farmland between nomadic and sedentary communities were particularly prominent in East, South and West Darfur during the ongoing migration and farming season. In East Darfur, on 2 July, Birgid and Ghuzam tribes clashed in Um Karasha village near Muhajeria, resulting in the death of two Birgid and two government police officers who attempted to defuse the situation. On 4 July, Beni Hussein and Salamat clashed in the Ingumbail area, north of Um Dukhun, Central Darfur, resulting in one fatality. In South Darfur, two Masalit tribesmen were killed in a confrontation with Southern Rezeigat in Goertobak area near Graida, on 18 and 19 July. During July, in the Aisha Bara area of West Darfur, south-east of El Geneina, tensions between local farmers and nomadic communities increased significantly and tribal authorities suspended farming activities pending a resolution of the dispute.

15. Internally displaced person farmers across all five states of Darfur were also frequently prevented from accessing their farmlands by Arab herders and subjected to physical attack, harassment and destruction of crops. During the review period in West Darfur, for example, farmers near the Krinding I and II, Kreinik and Sisi internally displaced person camps east of El Geneina were prevented from accessing their farmlands by armed Arabs demanding payment for its use or written forfeiture of their ownership rights.

Criminality and banditry

16. A total of 391 criminal incidents resulting in 93 fatalities were recorded compared to 316 incidents and 50 deaths during the previous period presenting a continued upward trend over the past 10 months. The most common crimes included murder (8), rape (42), shooting attack (73), armed robbery (66), attempted robbery (20), assault/harassment (69), burglary/break-in (29), looting (8), abduction (21), arson (5), ambush (11), threat (10) and livestock theft (29).

17. In North Darfur, the area around Kutum witnessed high rates of criminality, owing to the presence of Northern Rezeigat militias, as well as JEM and SLA/MM elements. On 22 July, armed men aboard three pick-up vehicles attacked Anka

village, north-east of Kutum, killing nine and abducting one civilian, looting property and rustling livestock. After similar attacks on internally displaced persons in the Labado area of East Darfur by early August, the Government reinforced the Sudanese Armed Forces and police presence in the area in order to enforce the rule of law.

B. Political developments

18. In the aftermath of the Sudanese national elections in April and the formation of a new Government in June 2015, the African Union High-level Implementation Panel continued its engagement with relevant stakeholders in order to gauge their views on prospects for the holding of a credible and inclusive national dialogue in the Sudan and the role of the synchronized mediation in this context. From 2 to 4 August, the Panel travelled to Khartoum and met with the Government and Khartoum-based opposition parties. In his meeting with the Chair of the Panel, President Thabo Mbeki on 3 August, President Bashir maintained that the national dialogue is a Sudan-owned process which should take place within the country and that there was therefore no need for a pre-dialogue meeting in Addis Ababa. He added that the dialogue would take place with or without the participation of the Darfur armed movements and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/North.

19. In his meeting with the national dialogue preparatory committee (the "7+7 mechanism") on 5 August, President Bashir indicated that the national dialogue would be launched on 10 October and that efforts would be made to ensure the participation of opposition parties and holdout stakeholders. On 20 August, President Bashir convened the General Assembly of the national dialogue in Khartoum without the participation of the major opposition parties and expressed his readiness to declare a two-month ceasefire in Darfur and the Two Areas and to provide amnesty to those who decide to join the dialogue. During their meeting with the African Union High-level Implementation Panel in Addis Ababa on 22 August, representatives of the Sudanese armed and political opposition reiterated their refusal to participate in the national dialogue in the current conditions and format and called for a new approach through the possible strengthening of the Panel by the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

20. From 19 to 23 August, the African Union Peace and Security Council visited the Sudan, including Darfur, to assess the situation. During its visit, the Peace and Security Council met with government officials and UNAMID, and visited an internally displaced person camp. Following the visit, during its 539th meeting, on 25 August, the Peace and Security Council issued a communiqué requesting the Government of the Sudan to desist from any actions that would undermine the holding of a credible and all-inclusive national dialogue and reiterated its call for an urgent pre-national dialogue meeting to be held in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. The Peace and Security Council further requested the Panel to continue its engagement in this context and to report within 90 days on the re-engagement of all Sudanese stakeholders in this process. On 30 August, President Bashir was quoted in the media reiterating his Government's opposition to hold a pre-national dialogue meeting outside of the Sudan. On 4 September, an ad hoc committee established under the "7+7 mechanism" to consider the Peace and Security Council decision reportedly submitted its recommendations and rejected the holding of such a pre-dialogue

meeting. Following a meeting of its leadership in Paris, from 9 to 14 September, the Sudan Revolutionary Front adopted a road map expressing readiness to sign a six-month cessation of hostilities agreement with the Government and support for the holding of the pre-dialogue meeting.

C. Humanitarian situation

21. The humanitarian situation in Darfur continued to be characterized by large-scale, protracted displacement. The current reporting period saw a level of new displacement lower than during the first half of the year, with humanitarian organizations receiving reports of just over 5,000 persons being displaced owing to intercommunal fighting in Mellit, North Darfur, and Beida, West Darfur. Humanitarian organizations have verified over 104,000 newly internally displaced persons in 2015 and received unconfirmed reports of an additional 69,000 persons, most of whom are in inaccessible areas in and around the Jebel Marra. Approximately 50,000 people displaced since the beginning of the year have returned to their places of origin. A total of more than 2.6 million persons remain displaced across Darfur.

22. From 4 to 7 June, together with UNAMID and local authorities, humanitarian partners conducted an integrated assessment mission to Guldo and Nertiti in the West Jebel Marra locality of Central Darfur. The assessment mission found that nearly 25,000 people fled to the towns from surrounding villages in the first quarter of 2015 and were in need of comprehensive humanitarian aid. Key remaining gaps in Guldo include health-care services and water and sanitation facilities. Also in early June, three local non-governmental organizations conducted a needs assessment mission in the Eastern Jebel Marra locality in South Darfur, another area to which humanitarian organizations have had limited access, and identified some 20,000 people in need of basic humanitarian assistance. Despite initial delays in reaching the area, access to Abu Karinka town, East Darfur, remained open throughout July and August, with food aid, health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, shelter and other support being provided.

23. Following reports of increased mortality rates owing to malnutrition in Nertiti, Central Darfur, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and partners visited the area and confirmed that six children, who arrived from areas without nutrition services, died in the local hospital since the beginning of July, owing to associated complications. Humanitarian partners continue to seek authorization to scale up life-saving nutrition services in and around Jebel Marra. Despite access limitations, UNICEF and partners reached 328,470 children for vaccination against measles (91 per cent of the target) during the reporting period.

D. Operating environment

Attacks against UNAMID

24. During the reporting period, a total of 69 incidents and hostile acts against UNAMID and its personnel were recorded in Darfur, compared to 60 in the previous period, including 35 cases of office break-in and theft, 19 of robbery and 15 of carjacking.

25. On 24 May, unknown gunmen aboard a motorcycle killed a UNAMID national staff member near the mission's base in Zalingei, Central Darfur. The motive behind the attack has not been determined and UNAMID and government police are still investigating the incident. On 2 June, a contractor convoy transporting contingent-owned equipment of the formed police unit of Bangladesh, travelling without military escort against UNAMID's advice, was attacked south of Menawashei, South Darfur. Government police and Rapid Support Forces troops killed three and captured five of the perpetrators in their pursuit and successfully recovered the equipment. Further attacks on UNAMID convoys by unidentified armed men took place on 15 and 24 July, respectively, north-west of Kutum, North Darfur, and near the Tulus team site, South Darfur. No casualties were reported in these incidents, while UNAMID troops responded by returning fire against the perpetrators who escaped. On 18 August, another unidentified armed group briefly halted a UNAMID convoy in Aljazera near Mellit, North Darfur, with no reported casualties.

26. On 6 June, two international contractual workers, who were abducted in Zalingei, Central Darfur, on 29 January 2015, were released in good health. A UNAMID national staff member, who was abducted by armed men in Nertiti, Central Darfur, on 21 July 2015, was released after five days in captivity.

27. In order to improve the security of United Nations and other personnel, UNAMID intensified patrols and the provision of armed escorts for movement in El Fasher. Increased coordination with government security agencies continued in order to more effectively pursue the perpetrators of attacks against UNAMID. On 28 June, UNAMID and the Special Prosecutor for Darfur crimes agreed to establish a joint team to review all cases of attacks against the mission's personnel and property with a view to expediting the investigations and prosecution of outstanding cases. To combat the increase in criminality in El Fasher, the new Governor of North Darfur issued a decree on 30 June enforcing strict security measures. On 14 July, the Government's anti-carjacking unit arrested three armed persons suspected of carjacking against United Nations personnel in El Fasher.

Attacks against United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations and humanitarian personnel

28. A total of 25 criminal incidents against humanitarian actors were recorded, down from 40 in the previous reporting period, including 3 abductions, 13 carjacking incidents and 9 armed attacks and robberies. On 4 June, a UNAMID-escorted convoy comprised of 11 World Food Programme (WFP) trucks, 8 UNAMID trucks and a fuel tanker, was attacked by unknown armed men south-west of Kutum, North Darfur. The WFP driver who was abducted by the attackers and his truck were recovered by government police the next day. On 2 August, in an attempt to extort money, an armed militia abducted the drivers of 10 WFP-contracted trucks for several days, along with their vehicles, east of Kabkabiya, North Darfur, before releasing them following the Governor's intervention. The same day, the dead body of an international NGO national staff member, who was abducted by armed men on 3 June, was found in Abdul Shakur village, west of Kutum, North Darfur. On 8 September, in Kreinik locality, near El Geneina, West Darfur, unidentified armed men ambushed a vehicle transporting two State officials and WHO representatives, killing the driver and a security official, and fled the scene with the vehicle.

Restrictions of movement, access denials and denial of clearances imposed on UNAMID

29. UNAMID continued to encounter restrictions of movement, access and security clearance denial for its patrols and other mandated activities. UNAMID experienced 13 restrictions compared to 24 during the previous period, with government authorities citing insecurity caused by the presence of armed groups as the most common reason for them. The decrease in restrictions occurred primarily because of the pause in fighting between the Government and the armed groups as a result of the weather conditions. The mission also experienced flight restrictions with Sudanese security agencies rejecting manifests or cancelling several flights without providing justification. For example, on 22 August, eight regularly scheduled UNAMID flights were cancelled owing to the refusal of national security at El Fasher airport to clear the manifests affecting 107 passengers.

30. Owing to delays and impediments imposed by government agencies in issuing authorization for the shipment of food rations for UNAMID troops from Port Sudan since May 2015, as of 15 September, the mission's reserve stock had decreased to about 50 per cent. A total of 129 containers with food rations have been blocked, resulting in the spoiling of 148 tons of food with subsequent impact upon the level of nutrition provided to the Force, and also upon its sustainability in terms of rations reserve stocks.

Access denials and restrictions imposed on humanitarian actors

31. Delays in conducting needs assessments owing to access restrictions remain a major concern, as do the quality and duration of the access, once granted, particularly in Jebel Marra. From April to June, the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Sudan reported that out of 1,451 inter- and intra-State travel authorization requests submitted, 232 (16 per cent) were delayed and 67 (nearly 5 per cent) denied. The denials included requests for access to areas most affected by conflict around Jebel Marra, including some locations that have not been reached since early 2010. Almost half of all inter-State travel requests were delayed, denied or restricted. Furthermore, half of the organizations reported having applied "self-limiting behavior" by refraining from submitting requests which they knew would be denied.

Visas

32. Denials and delays in the issuance of visas continued to negatively affect the mission's ability to deploy personnel and implement its mandate. In the reporting period, 772 visas were approved by the Government, including for 21 civilians, 135 military, 282 police, 205 contractors, 106 consultants and official visitors and 23 dependants. A total of 52 applications for entry visas and resident visa renewals were rejected, including for crucial senior-level vacancies, such as selected candidates for the Principal Humanitarian Affairs Officer and the Senior Women Protection Adviser on two occasions each, as well as the Head of Office in South Darfur. The sections most affected in this context were the Security Section, with 11 visa denials, and the Protection of Civilians Section, the Joint Operations Centre and the Human Rights Section, with five each. For the Protection of Civilians Section, this represents almost 40 per cent of its international staff; in the Human Rights Section, 50 per cent of international positions remain vacant owing to the

lack of visas and seven resident visa requests are currently pending. In the Joint Operations Centre, six out of seven posts are vacant, five owing to visa issues. A further 132 visa requests submitted during the reporting period have been delayed without a response. Five staff visas have been pending since the previous reporting period, with one case awaiting a response since 19 November 2014.

III. Mandate implementation

A. Support for an inclusive peace process

High-level mediation

33. During the period under review, the Acting Joint Special Representative/Joint Chief Mediator continued engaging the Government of the Sudan and the non-signatory armed movements, including JEM, SLA/MM and SLA/AW, on the resumption of negotiations. The parties maintained their divergent positions regarding the scope and format of such a process, particularly with respect to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur as the framework of negotiation.

34. On 5 July, the Acting Joint Special Representative met with officials of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Khartoum, who expressed their Government's readiness to resume discussions with the Darfur armed movements, but only within the framework of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and with Doha as the venue for those talks. This position was further reiterated by President Bashir during his meeting with President Mbeki in Khartoum on 3 August. President Bashir added that there would be no reopening of discussions on the Doha Document and that, with the exception of small pockets held by SLA/AW, the armed movements no longer had a presence in Darfur.

35. From 26 to 28 May, during their consultations with the Acting Joint Special Representative on the margins of a meeting on the rights of children in armed conflict in Stadtschlaining, Austria, the leadership of the three armed movements expressed concern with the stalemate in the Darfur peace process. Furthermore, while noting their readiness to engage in the national dialogue, they stated that it was not their priority. In a follow-up meeting with the Acting Joint Special Representative in Paris, on 14 and 15 August, the armed movements acknowledged some positive aspects of the Doha Document, but reiterated their reservations about its being used as the basis for negotiations. The movements agreed to further consultations on a possible agenda and venue for the talks and undertook to submit their written position in this regard, as soon as possible.

Implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur

36. The consequences of the split of the former Liberation and Justice Movement into two political parties and the uncertainty regarding the future of the Darfur Regional Authority created serious tension between the signatories of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and undermined its implementation. As part of the new Government appointed by President Bashir, each of the two new political parties, the National Liberation and Justice Party, led by the Chair of the Darfur Regional Authority, Tijani el-Seisi, and the Liberation and Justice Party, led by the

former Secretary-General of the Liberation and Justice Movement, Bahar Abu Garda, were given one federal position and one State ministerial position.

37. On 28 June, following months of speculation about the future of the Darfur Regional Authority, President Bashir issued a decree extending its term for one year. In doing so, the Government sought to ensure the implementation of all outstanding provisions of the Doha Document, particularly those related to a referendum determining the final administrative status of Darfur. No steps, however, have so far been taken to establish the Referendum Commission.

38. With the extension of the Darfur Regional Authority, disagreements over the status of the Chair and its incumbent El-Seisi began to emerge. On 29 July, the Abu Garda faction reportedly requested the Government of Qatar to cease all funding to the Darfur Regional Authority and for projects under the Doha Document until the signatories agree upon a programme of action that takes into account the Liberation and Justice Movement split and the accession of JEM-Sudan. On 26 August, during a ceremony in Khartoum to mark the commencement of the second phase of projects under the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund, a heated confrontation between members of the Liberation and Justice Party and the National Liberation and Justice Party took place in which the former contested the attribution of 620 development projects and the legitimacy of the current Darfur Regional Authority leadership. On 5 September, the Liberation and Justice Party and JEM-Sudan signed a joint memorandum requesting an audit of the performance of the Darfur Regional Authority in the past four years, including the investigation of corruption allegations. This followed the announcement, on 31 August, of another memorandum on political cooperation signed between the National Liberation and Justice Party and a splinter faction of JEM-Sudan led by Abdel Rahman Banat.

39. Delays were also experienced in the implementation of the Final Security Arrangements owing to the failure of the parties to adhere to its provisions on eligibility criteria and lists of combatants. The demobilization of 1,500 former combatants from the Liberation and Justice Movement and JEM-Sudan in East and South Darfur, which was planned for June, commenced on 8 September and is expected to last for one month. Furthermore, obligations and deadlines under the Doha Document for the transfer of funds to the Darfur Regional Authority for justice and reconciliation, compensation and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees remain unimplemented.

40. The second phase of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation process was launched on 3 June and local-level dialogue was successfully completed in 17 localities in North, South, Central and West Darfur. The dialogue was postponed in East Darfur owing to security conditions following the intercommunal fighting between the Ma'alia and Southern Rezeigat. The dialogue in the remaining 43 localities has still not been conducted owing to the lack of adequate funding, despite the efforts of UNAMID and the Implementation Committee of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation to engage with the Government and donors, in this regard. On 8 September, during the tenth meeting of the Implementation Follow-Up Commission of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, held in Doha, Qatar, as the Chair, reiterated the role of this agreement as the main framework for the resolution of the Darfur conflict and expressed dissatisfaction with the divisions between its signatories. The parties pledged their cooperation to ensure the full implementation of its provisions.

B. Protection of civilians

Provision of physical protection

41. UNAMID continued to provide protection through its presence and confidence-building patrols in civilian areas, particularly within and near internally displaced person camps, markets and villages, thereby ensuring area-security for the conduct of protection and humanitarian activities. During the reporting period, the mission's advocacy with the Government and armed movements contributed towards improved access to vulnerable and affected populations and facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need.

42. The UNAMID military personnel conducted a total of 21,267 patrols, comprising 13,047 protection of civilian patrols, 257 humanitarian armed escorts and 8,220 protection of UNAMID patrols. A total of 5,973 villages and 8,220 internally displaced person camps were covered during these patrols. UNAMID police conducted 9,298 patrols, compared to 6,819 during the same time period in 2014, including 4,869 confidence-building patrols to internally displaced person communities and 4,429 patrols to respond to the security needs of internally displaced persons, including women and children, while collecting firewood or engaged in farming activities. These patrols not only increased the mission's presence in critical civilian areas, but also provided an opportunity for joint engagement among UNAMID components, and with government partners, to carry out protection risk assessments and gather information on early warning indicators.

43. In an effort to prevent clashes during the annual migration of cattle through East Darfur, UNAMID provided financial and technical support to the demarcation of three migration routes in that State. In addition, UNAMID military provided a 40,000 litre water tank to meet the basic water needs of the community in Labado, East Darfur.

44. As a follow-up to the inter-agency assessment mission to Guldo and Nertiti in early June, UNAMID and the United Nations country team delivered food and non-food items to displaced communities in the area on 16 June and 16 and 26 August. The mission, along with humanitarian actors, continued its engagement with the authorities for the provision of unrestricted and timely access to the area.

45. UNAMID addressed the threat posed by explosive hazards through clearance of suspected hazardous areas and ammunition safety management operations. During the reporting period, 497 items of unexploded ordnance and 123 pieces of small arms ammunition were destroyed in 18 villages. UNAMID provided more than 300 education sessions on the risks of explosive remnants of war to over 25,000 civilians, including women and children. Radio broadcasts conveyed safety messages to an estimated 80,000 civilians.

Logistic and security support to humanitarian operations

46. UNAMID provided 257 armed escorts throughout Darfur, compared to 67 in the last reporting period, to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as assessment and monitoring missions in different parts of Darfur. Of these escorts, 19 were provided for the World Food Programme, which facilitated the delivery of 4,231 metric tons of food to beneficiaries.

47. UNAMID formed police units provided nine escorts for humanitarian partners, which enabled them to conduct assessment and monitoring missions to internally displaced person camps. The mission provided accommodation for humanitarian actors at its residential facilities across Darfur and continues to co-locate with some agencies at its sector offices and team sites. Humanitarian assets, such as vehicles and other machinery, remained stored in UNAMID facilities.

Promoting a protective environment

48. UNAMID documented 113 new incidents of human rights violations and abuses, involving 403 victims (including 29 minors) compared to 118 incidents involving 252 victims during the last reporting period. There were 53 confirmed cases of human rights violations and abuses, while the remaining 48 cases, although unconfirmed, are highly likely to have occurred, based on information corroborated from various sources. Of the 113 cases, 24 involving 28 victims were allegedly perpetrated by government security forces and proxy entities. The remaining 89 cases, with 357 victims, were allegedly perpetrated by unidentified armed men, often described by the victims as "unidentified armed Arab men". The violation of the right to life accounted for 32 cases and 116 victims including three minors, the right to physical integrity accounted for 58 cases and 228 victims with seven minors, and five cases of abduction involving 35 victims. Two cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, involving four victims, were documented. Sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, accounted for 14 cases involving 18 victims (including five minors). A number of sexual assault cases were recorded against female internally displaced persons while collecting firewood or engaged in farming activities.

49. Victims of human rights violations and abuses continued to face difficulties in accessing judicial redress owing to a number of factors, including lack of action by police to initiate investigations and bring perpetrators to justice. The low level of investigations and prosecutions has encouraged perpetrators to act with impunity and contributed to diminishing trust in the justice system. From the 113 documented cases, 50 were reported to the Sudanese police across various localities in Darfur. Only 12 of the 50 reported cases were investigated, resulting in seven arrests. However, no prosecution was reported following the arrests. In relation to the 38 remaining reported cases, interviews and testimonies from victims and/or witnesses indicated that no action was taken by the government authorities. As highlighted in the previous reporting period, government authorities continue to blame lack of capacity and low reporting of cases for the low level of police action.

50. Violations and abuses documented followed trends that are consistent with previously established patterns associated with the Darfur conflict. Impunity, overall insecurity and the proliferation of weapons has fuelled human rights violations and abuses. Increasingly, the spillover effects of intercommunal violence have resulted in attacks against civilians resulting in deaths, injuries and loss of property. UNAMID observed a trend in documented incidents related to the continuing threat posed by "armed Arab men" who were present within or near internally displaced person camps and, along with other unidentified persons, attacked civilians engaged in farming, thus depriving them of critical sources of food and subsistence income.

51. UNAMID continued to engage with State and judicial authorities to address the issue of impunity, meeting with the Prosecutor for El Fasher and Tawilla on the

status of outstanding cases related to alleged killings and physical assault of civilians in North Darfur, and with the Chair of the North Darfur Legislative Assembly, to discuss alleged human rights abuses related to the Berti and Beni Omran conflict. A mapping exercise of police stations and prisons conducted by UNAMID indicated major gaps in police presence in Darfur, with only 74 police and 54 subpolice stations serving a population of 7 million people. In addition to this deficit, UNAMID highlighted the prolonged lack of police presence in Kutum, Tawilla, Um Baru and Kornoi localities in its engagement with State authorities. The establishment of a Sudanese police post in Labado in East Darfur in August was a welcome development.

52. In August 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published the Report on Impunity and Accountability in Darfur for 2014 covering human rights abuses documented by UNAMID during that year (a total of 411 cases) and providing an analysis of the continuing sources of impunity, including challenges to access to justice and the right to remedy for victims in the region. Following the announcement by the JEM leadership on 16 August that the Government intended to execute seven of its members who were captured in 2010 after an attack on the Central Reserve Forces in South Darfur and subsequently sentenced to death, UNAMID engaged with relevant Sudanese authorities urging a moratorium on the death penalty and was subsequently informed that their death sentences were suspended.

53. In July, in collaboration with relevant authorities, UNAMID trained over 100 judicial officers, including prosecutors, lawyers and rural court judges in criminal investigations, mediation and conflict prevention and conducted outreach programmes to increase the human rights knowledge of the state officials.

54. On 12 August, the Government confirmed that it would contribute 30 per cent of the implementation cost of the Five-year Strategic Plan for the Darfur Prisons System, which was developed with support from UNAMID and the United Nations country team. Further, Darfur prison authorities implemented some of UNAMID's recommendations following the Zalingei Prison escape of 14 April 2015, including infrastructure repairs, classification of inmates and transfer of serious offenders to maximum security facilities. To further strengthen prison security, from 17 to 30 June, UNAMID trained 30 prison officers on principles of good order and control, contingency planning, disaster management and early warning mechanisms. Thirty prison managers were trained on the humane management and administration of prisons.

55. The implementation of community-based labour intensive projects for youths considered to be at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour included 22 projects in the area of vocational and on-the-job skills training across all states of Darfur targeting over 1,500 youth. UNAMID, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, commenced the development of a community stabilization programme planned for September. UNAMID also completed 18 quick-impact projects across Darfur to support the immediate needs of the communities and local authorities in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation, as part of confidence-building initiatives between UNAMID and the local population.

56. UNAMID provided technical training for 305 local police officers on crime scene management, community policing and computer skills, and administered English classes to 206 police officers. Measures have also been taken to improve

security and collaboration between stakeholders. To this end, 48 Community Safety Committee meetings were conducted to strengthen community policing activities in the internally displaced person camps, supported by 277 joint patrols with community policing volunteers as part of crime prevention initiatives in such camps. In addition, 98 sensitization sessions were conducted on crime prevention for Sudanese police, as well as 141 on sexual and gender-based violence for internally displaced persons.

57. Regular capacity-building for host communities on child rights and child protection, as well as efforts to boost the capacity of local structures on monitoring and reporting mechanisms on violations against children, under Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), continued during the reporting period. This has enabled the communities to become more cooperative and bold in reporting, and consequently an increasing number of violations against children are being reported. As part of the mission's efforts to sensitize the belligerents about the rights of children in armed conflict, the Acting Joint Special Representative facilitated consultations between my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and the Darfur armed movements from 26 to 28 May 2015 in Stadtschlaining, Austria, in collaboration with the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution. During the event, the leaders of JEM, SLA/AW and SLA/MM issued a statement pledging to take all necessary measures to prevent any violations against children in Darfur. A follow-up meeting, including humanitarian actors, is expected to take place in November 2015.

C. Local conflict mediation

58. UNAMID, in collaboration with government authorities and other stakeholders, continued to support the mediation of intercommunal conflict through its engagement with national and local government, traditional mediators, tribal and community leaders and relevant institutions under the Darfur Regional Authority, as well as other stakeholders. The mission continued to place emphasis on early warning, preventive measures, capacity-building and efforts to address the root causes of these conflicts.

59. In the aftermath of the violence between the Ma'alia and Southern Rezeigat in East Darfur, UNAMID engaged with the Shura (advisory) Councils of both tribes in Khartoum, respectively, on 28 and 31 May, urging them to embrace dialogue and discussed possibilities for a renewal of the reconciliation process. During the July mobilization of Southern Rezeigat youth, the mission engaged with native leaders and local authorities to de-escalate tensions. On 27 August, UNAMID conducted an assessment mission in Abu Karinka locality for the first time in five years and engaged with the authorities on prospects for the establishment of a new mission team site in the area. On 2 September, UNAMID also facilitated a mission by the Governor of East Darfur to Abu Karinka to engage with the Ma'alia.

60. Similarly, throughout the most recent crisis between the Berti and Zeyadiyah in North Darfur, UNAMID engaged with community leaders, local authorities, including the Malha commissioner and the Meidob tribe, which had been at the forefront of previous mediation efforts, influential tribal figures in Khartoum, the native administrations in Khartoum and the Darfur Regional Authority, to facilitate a cessation of hostilities and encourage reconciliation. On 9, 11 and 14 July, the

mission conducted integrated assessment and confidence-building missions to Ein El Dess and Hillat Ahmed Shayib, as well as other villages affected by the conflict in the Mellit area.

61. In order to mitigate the renewed conflict between the Habaniya and the Southern Rezeigat in July, UNAMID engaged with key stakeholders, including native leaders, the former Governor of South Darfur and current government officials. The mission was further invited to participate in special taskforces of both tribes with the objective of finding a sustainable solution to the conflict. On 24 July, UNAMID facilitated the travel of the Habaniya taskforce to Al Sunta locality in order to assess the humanitarian situation and encourage the demobilization of local youth and the return of displaced persons, and prepare the ground for the holding of a reconciliation process.

62. In an effort to prevent seasonal conflict, UNAMID engaged local stakeholders to encourage peaceful coexistence between farming and pastoral communities. UNAMID also supported the work of agricultural protection committees, peaceful coexistence committees, the native administration and local authorities in Darfur to promote dialogue and shared access to natural resources, including supporting inter-tribal committees between the Massalit and Fallata and the Fallata and Salamat.

IV. Implementation of the strategic review recommendations

A. Improved effectiveness and streamlining

63. The mission continued to implement the recommendations of my special report of 25 February 2014 (S/2014/138) to further improve its capabilities and effectiveness. Currently, UNAMID has 40 units deployed (27 military and 13 formed police units). The serviceability of contingent-owned equipment remained satisfactory at 92 per cent during the previous quarter. Nonetheless, equipment shortfalls and serviceability of equipment in some contingents continue to persist, particularly because of wear and tear and delays in the deployment of equipment owing to government clearances and contracting issues.

64. Secretariat and mission staff are cooperating closely to complete the last phase of the streamlining exercise of civilian staff which comprises the abolishment of 488 positions (10 international, 476 national and 2 United Nations Volunteers) by 31 December 2015. Working groups established at Headquarters and in the mission continued their work preparing and synchronizing the necessary steps to ensure a smooth process and to support staff members who would be affected by the streamlining exercise.

65. In June 2015, UNAMID implemented a new communications strategy providing for a more proactive, robust and assertive media policy, a more effective use of social media, the strengthening of internal communication channels and the development of a set of messages tailored according to themes and audiences. The objective of the strategy is to provide an accurate account of the achievements of UNAMID in an efficient, effective and transparent manner.

B. Transfer of mandated tasks to the United Nations country team and exit strategy

66. Further to Security Council resolutions 2173 (2014) and 2228 (2015), UNAMID and the United Nations country team commenced the development of an operational plan for the gradual and phased transfer of tasks to the latter, following the revision of the mission's priorities. The requisite joint coordination mechanisms were established during the reporting period for the purpose of monitoring and implementing both the transfer process and the integrated strategic framework for the cooperation between UNAMID and the United Nations country team for 2014-2016. Work on the operational plan for the transfer was divided into three phases: the enumeration of the mission's mandated activities that would be carried out jointly or transferred to the country team, the identification of necessary requirements for the transfer (including financial, human resources, existence of NGO partners, security conditions, government cooperation, among others), and the development of a corresponding timetable.

67. In accordance with the strategic analysis presented to the Council in my previous report of 26 May 2015 (S/2015/378), UNAMID and the country team have enumerated the specific tasks and completed the first phase of the process. In this context and pursuant to Security Council resolution 2228 (2015), they have also established a coordination mechanism for the rule of law under the Global Focal Point umbrella which will guide their joint activities in the police, justice and corrections sectors in order to ensure a coordinated and seamless gradual transfer of these tasks. Activities related to advocacy and capacity-building for the Government on the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming, which were gradually discontinued by the mission, in line with the UNAMID strategic review of 2014, are in the process of being fully taken over by the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), respectively. The next phase of the process, namely the identification of necessary requirements, including funding options and modalities for the transfer, is expected to be completed by November 2015.

68. Further to Security Council resolution 2228 (2015) and the communiqués of the African Union Peace and Security Council adopted during its 516th and 529th meetings held, respectively, on 22 June and 31 July 2015, the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission have invited the Government of the Sudan to undertake high-level political consultations to draw up the appropriate steps, process and format of an exit strategy on the basis of the mission's existing benchmarks. The consultations will take place at the end of September in the margins of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, in New York.

V. Financial aspects

69. The General Assembly, by its resolution 69/261 B of 25 June 2015, appropriated the amount of $1,102.2 million for the maintenance of UNAMID for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

70. As at 25 August 2015, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNAMID amounted to $663.2 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions

for all peacekeeping operations at that date a..ounted to $4,404.2 million. Reimbursement to the contributing Governments for troop and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the period up to 30 April 2015 and 31 March 2015, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VI. Observations

71. The continued lack of progress towards the political resolution of the conflict in Darfur is of grave concern. The fighting between the Government and the armed movements and its consequences continue to bring suffering to the people of Darfur. Of a population of about 7 million, 4.4 million people rely on humanitarian aid for their survival, including 2.6 million internally displaced persons.

72. The Government's stated intention to declare a two-month ceasefire in Darfur, as well as in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, is commendable. However, the return of displaced people to their places of origin requires a sustained effort by the warring parties to find a political solution to the conflict. In this regard, I commend the efforts of the Acting Joint Special Representative to revitalize the Darfur peace process, through engagement with the non-signatory movements in support of the synchronized mediation led by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. I encourage all parties to support these efforts with a view to achieving the expedient resumption of direct talks on Darfur. I further express my full support to the Panel, which, together with UNAMID and my Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, continues to explore options for finding negotiated solutions to the conflicts in the Sudan. There is no military solution to the conflict in Darfur. I therefore reiterate my call on both the Government and the armed movements in Darfur to immediately resume direct talks, without any preconditions, with a view to achieving a negotiated settlement to the crisis.

73. I remain very concerned about the increasing frequency of intercommunal conflict and its devastating impact on the civilian population in Darfur. In this regard, the efforts of the Government to contain the effects of fighting between local tribes during the past three months, as well as to curb the continuing high rates of criminality, are welcome. The Government, nevertheless, should also complement these efforts by developing a comprehensive strategy to address the root causes of these conflicts, including comprehensive and inclusive consultations with the communities, the establishment of appropriate legal and political frameworks and the reinforcement of the justice and law enforcement sectors. UNAMID will continue to extend its support in this regard.

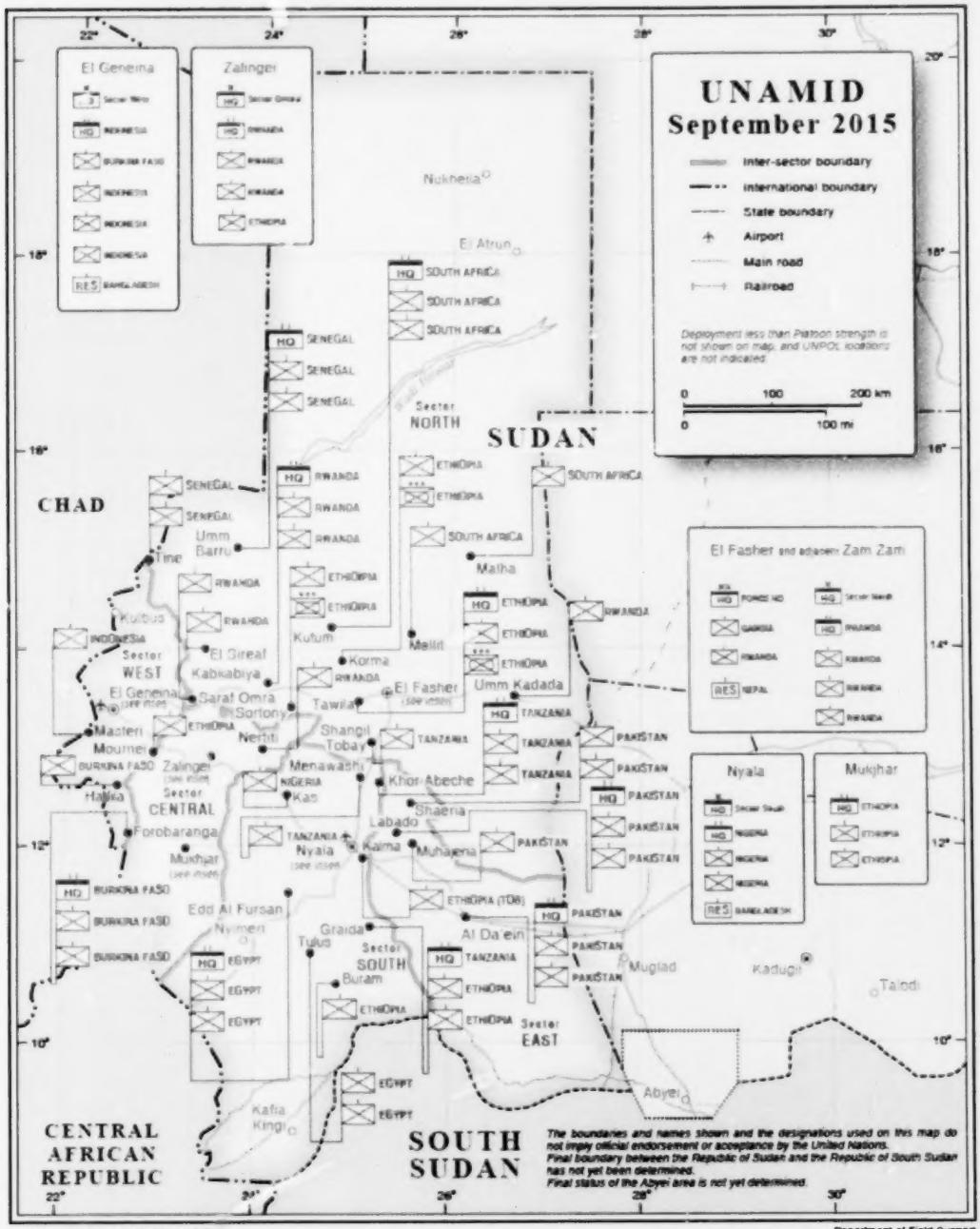
74. The extension of the term of the Darfur Regional Authority for an additional year is a step towards ensuring the continuing implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and resulting benefits to the people of Darfur. It is important that the signatory parties to the agreement reach a consensus on the future of the Darfur Regional Authority leadership to ensure the continued implementation of the Doha Document. I thank the Government of Qatar for its continued support to the Doha Document.

75. The progress made in the implementation of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation, notably with the completion of the first and commencement of the second phase of the process, is encouraging. In this regard, I call on the Government of the Sudan to fulfil its pledge and request the support of all relevant stakeholders,

donors and institutions to provide the necessary funds to ensure the successful implementation of this process and other development and recovery projects in Darfur.

76. I condemn the continued attacks on United Nations personnel and humanitarian actors in Darfur by criminal elements. I urge the Government to fulfil its responsibilities in this regard by providing protection and ensuring that these cases are investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. I regret that the Government and the armed movements continue to restrict the access of UNAMID and humanitarian actors to vulnerable populations throughout Darfur. I also regret the Government's continued denials and delays of visa requests for UNAMID personnel, which prevent the deployment of crucial personnel. I seek the support of the Security Council in urging the Government to comply with the provisions of the Status of Forces Agreement and enable the mission to discharge its mandate.

77. In conclusion, I would like to thank the Acting Joint Special Representative/ Joint Chief Mediator, Abiodun Oluremi Bashua, and all the personnel of UNAMID, the United Nations and the humanitarian community, who, in the face of considerable adversity, continue their tireless efforts to improve the lives of the people of Darfur. I also commend my Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios, and Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Abdulsalami Abubakar of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel for their unceasing efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict.



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